

Spring 1-15-2011

WST 4309-001: Feminist Theory

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WST 4309 Feminist Theory
Sect. 001, CRN 31668
4:30-5:45 p.m. in the WRC
Spring, 2011

"The point is to change the world, not only to study it."

--Liz Stanley

Dr. Jeannie Ludlow **Office:** Coleman 3139 **Phone:** 581-6970 **Mailbox:** English, CH 3155
e-mail: jludlow@eiu.edu **Please** use WebCT to e-mail me for course-related questions or concerns.

Office Hours: MF 10 a.m. to noon; W 2 to 3:30 p.m., and by appointment

Availability: If you would like to meet with me outside of these office hours, please do e-mail or call for an appointment; I will do my best to accommodate your schedule. My administrative duties dictate that my schedule can be a bit unpredictable, so you may want to call before dropping by for office hours. I check my e-mail at the beginning and end of each work day and seldom on weekends.

Description: This course examines feminist theory and its application to cultural and academic issues. It provides an interdisciplinary approach to women's issues.

Course Format and Expectations: This is a seminar course, which by definition means that it is student-centered and student-driven. It is my educational philosophy that each of us is responsible for her/his own education; the role of the "professor" is to guide and facilitate the learning process, not to tell students what to think. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class fully prepared to engage in discussions, activities, etc., that revolve around the assigned materials. This is a feminist course; this means the course content and teaching are based in a particular political perspective. It is, however, never expected that students will unquestioningly agree with (or even completely understand) materials assigned for class. Critical thinking and articulation of disagreements and difficulties are encouraged.

Course goals and objectives:

1. Students will develop an understanding of the historical development of feminism in the U.S. and globally.
2. Students will comprehend the links between political/economic structures and social action.
3. Students will experience the relationship between political theory and activist practice through hands-on projects.
4. Students will practice critical reading of theoretical materials with the goal of becoming more comfortable with them.
5. Students will practice research, writing, and public speaking skills as they research, prepare and present their papers, exams, and final projects.

Special circumstances: Any student who needs disability accommodations for this course should please speak with me as soon as possible. Please note that the University's Office of Disability Services (581-6583) will help with designated learning needs, mobility needs, etc

GRADES will be earned through the following graded components, which will be assigned whole letter grades:

1. Participation (includes attendance, weekly posting of discussion questions on WebCT, daily in-class writing, in-class and on-line activities and discussion, and successful completion of all reading and homework assignments)—must be worth a minimum of 20% of total grade
2. Three short papers—must be worth a minimum of 10% of total grade
3. Two exams—must be worth a minimum of 10% of total grade
4. Archival research project—must be worth a minimum of 10% of total grade
5. Final research/action project—must be worth a minimum of 20% of total grade

You will choose how your grade will be earned; 70% has been designated. You may choose to distribute the value among the graded components in any way that suits you. Please take care that your percentages all add up to 100%. Your decision must be registered with me by the beginning of class on Jan. 24, or I will assign each of your components 20% (please see the graded components worksheet).

IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE, YOU MUST COMPLETE FOR GRADING
 THE RESEARCH/ACTION PROJECT, THE ARCHIVAL PROJECT, ALL THREE PAPERS & BOTH EXAMS.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is crucial to your grade. In-class graded activities will be accepted for grading only during the class session in which they are done (no make ups on in-class work). In addition, please keep in mind that you will be responsible for everything that is said, viewed, assigned, etc., during any class sessions that you miss. Information from lectures, discussions, and in-class activities will be covered on the exams. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you missed and to make sure that you get copies of handouts, worksheets, etc., from me. If you are late to class, it is your job to check with me at the end of class to make sure you are marked “not absent.”

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In this course, we will comply with EIU’s academic integrity policy (please see your catalog). I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. Please note that “plagiarism or cheating” includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. **quoting** from a source without correctly citing that source and/or without using quotation marks
2. **paraphrasing** from a source without correctly citing that source
3. turning in a paper with an **incorrect or incomplete works cited list**
4. **falsifying** data
5. turning in **someone else’s work** as your own—this includes (but is not limited to)
 - a. **copying** another’s work from a quiz or assignment
 - b. turning in work that **someone else wrote** for you
 - c. using on-line or hard copy **paper mills**
6. turning in **your own work that was written for another course**, without prior permission.

Violations of EIU’s academic integrity policy will result in an **automatic failing grade** in this course and notification of the Office of Student Services. For more information, see www.eiu.edu/~judicial.

LATE POLICY: Late work is strongly discouraged. However, late is better than not at all. Work will depreciate in value one letter grade for each school day it is late, beginning at 2:00 p.m. on the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the time noted in the schedule.

Materials needed:

PLEASE NOTE: You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. Two required texts for this course are available from Textbook Rental. This class also requires readings from a supplemental text (listed below), which is available for purchase in the university bookstore. You are not required to buy it, but you are required to read it. I will put one copy of the supplemental text on reserve in Booth library. Some required readings will also be available only via WebCT.

REQUIRED TEXTS from TRS

Kolmar, Wendy, and Frances Bartkowski, eds. *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 2nd edition. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2005.

Gillis, Stacy, Gillian Howie, and Rebecca Munford, eds. *Third Wave Feminism: A Critical Exploration*. Expanded 2nd edition. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT from the bookstore

Pezzullo, Phaedra. *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-8173-5587-6.

A great on-line dictionary site: www.onelook.com

ASSIGNMENTS AND PROTOCOL

PARTICIPATION

Participation consists of regular attendance and productive participation in class discussions and in-class activities.

A = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **active and substantive participation in class discussions, explicitly about the materials assigned for that day or unit**, involving obvious critical thought and making connections to other materials or examples; avoidance of “side” conversations in class; leadership role in group activities and discussion; professional interactions with others in class, even when disagreeing strongly, and in all communications with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices during class

B = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **consistent participation in class discussions and activities with some references to assigned materials**, even when confused or struggling with ideas; professional

- behavior in class (including not carrying on “side” conversations and not being rude) and in all communication with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices during class
- C = consistent attendance with full preparation of course materials but **little to no verbal participation in discussions** unless required; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; consistent “follower” role in group activities; OR consistent **enthusiastic participation in discussions and activities, with no explicit evidence of full preparation of course materials**; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices during class
- D = frequent lateness or absence; unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior in class or on the discussion board (including, but not limited to, doing homework for other classes, reading newspapers in class, occasionally attending to cell phones, “side” conversations, etc.)
- F = missing class; disruptive or hostile behavior in class or on the course discussion board; frequently attending to cell phones or other electronic devices during class.

Archival research project, two parts

In early April, we will visit the archives of a research university in Chicago. You will have an assignment to complete while you are there. Before you go, we will do a practice archival research project here at EIU. More info on both of these assignments will be forthcoming.

E-mail guidelines: When you communicate with your instructors, whether by e-mail, by phone, or in person, you are engaging in a professional exchange. Please be sure to reflect this professionalism in your communication. All e-mails must have an appropriate salutation (“Dear Professor,” “Hello, Dr. Ludlow,” etc.) and must be signed with your name or a recognizable nickname. Your e-mails should be written with complete words and in complete sentences (“May I schedule an appointment with you?” not “Can I C U?”). Also, please note that I only check my e-mail two or three times each school day. Give me at least one full school day (24 hours, M – F) to answer any e-mail message—I typically do not check my campus e-mail on weekends. (PLEASE NOTE: these are very good guidelines to follow for all your professors.)

Exams

Each exam for this class will be a take-home exam comprised of a few short answer questions (dealing with important terminology) and one essay question; you may be asked about any materials covered in class up to that point. Exam 1 will be due in early March. Exam 2 will be due during final exam week.

Papers—these papers function primarily as **analytical response papers** that include applications and additional research. You will submit these papers for grading via e-mail; please be sure that the entire paper is properly formatted and is in one single document (Word or Rich Text only, please). Please note that *length requirements* are determined by word count, not page count, and every word counts—title, citations, works cited list, etc.

Remember that **in order to pass** a paper must have:

- a clear thesis idea (explicitly stated or implied)—not just description
- all the parts of an essay (intro, multiple body paragraphs, conclusion)
- a point (a reason to read it)
- an audience (your audience is your classmates)
- specific examples in every paragraph, which uphold the thesis idea
- a complete and correct Works Cited list, citing three required readings from class *and* at least two additional (not from class) sources
- competent grammar and spelling

In order **to earn an A**, a paper must have all of the above plus:

- an original idea or strong analysis, with no internal inconsistencies or argumentative fallacies
- evidence of critical thinking and reading (don’t believe everything you read/hear)
- creative introduction and conclusion
- direct engagement with counterargument (that is, with ideas that disagree with yours)
- synthesis and analysis (not just summary and description)
- no spelling/grammar errors

For each paper, you should cite at least three readings from our required course materials plus at least two sources from your additional research.

Each paper will be graded on the basis of the following (in addition to the above):

- does it meet the assignment criteria (length, format, etc.)?
- does it address the assigned topic, accurately and informatively?
- is the relationship between the paper and our class readings/materials made explicit?
- does it demonstrate research competence?
- does it demonstrate strong synthesis writing (putting sources in conversation with one another) ability?
- does it show that you have thought through the assignment carefully?

Paper due dates are flexible; when there is a topic in class that you want to know more about, write your paper that week. All students in the class will write three short papers (typed, double-spaced, *maximum length 2500 words* [approximately 9 pp.]; minimum length whatever it takes to do a good job). **Your first paper must be submitted for grading no later than Feb. 14, 2011; the second paper must be submitted for grading no later than March 23, 2011; the third paper must be submitted for grading no later than April 20, 2011.** If you choose to write all three of your papers in January, of course you may.

Final Project

In “Educating Women: A Feminist Agenda,” bell hooks challenges feminists to take feminist messages to those outside of the universities. This is the challenge of your final project in this course. For this assignment, you will choose a feminist issue that we’ve discussed (even briefly) in class and that you care about. You will do further research on this issue to learn more. Then, you will develop a plan for taking your knowledge to the community (broadly defined)—please do not plan to take this knowledge to children or to an elementary, middle, jr. high, or high school. You will implement your plan. Then you will write up and present to the class a report that tells what issue you chose, what you learned about the issue doing the research, what plan you developed, and how well your plan worked and why (or why not). You may choose to collaborate with another student on this assignment (each student does separate research and writes a separate paper, but you may work together on the plan and implementation). **I strongly recommend working in teams; more people = more energy for more creative projects.** The ideal plan would be for us to work together as a class on a major project; however, if you decide to work in smaller groups, I will support that decision.

For your consideration: last year’s class chose to fulfill this requirement by designing the WHAM display in the library. You may choose to do this, too, if you wish. If this were your choice, your display would need to be completed and up by March 1, 2011 (which also means you would be done with this major assignment by then).

This assignment has five primary elements:

A. the topic—proposal

- choose an issue in which you are interested
- do preliminary research to see whether you will be able to access good information
- write a one-page proposal in which you tell me what issue you’ve chosen and why; what you have learned during your preliminary research (proposals without preliminary research will fail); who else you are working with (if anyone); and your preliminary plan of action (what you are going to do to bring the info to others)

B. the research—annotated bibliography

- research at least four additional (not from class!) academic or professional sources about your topic (note: activist websites may be very helpful to you, but do not constitute “research” for the purposes of this assignment)
- write an annotated bibliography from your research (this is like a regular bibliography but it includes short [100-150 words each] descriptions written by you telling how each work relates to your particular issue/action)

C. the plan/implementation

- coordinate what you need for your plan, and do it!
- remember to keep in touch with me as you do this, so I can help you with any logistical problems that come up

D. written report—Your written report is to be no more than 1500 words (approximately 5 pp., typed, double-spaced) and should be a full account of what topic you chose, what you learned about the issue doing the research, what your plan was and how well it worked (and why/not), what you learned doing your project, and how your research and your plan enhanced one another. In this report, you must include a strong argument for how your work on this project is related to feminism. Your written report must include a self-evaluation, in which

you evaluate your work on this project (i.e., give yourself a grade) and explain that evaluation. If you collaborate with another student, you must also include an evaluation (grade) of that student and a rationale for your evaluation of her/him.

- E. **in-class presentation**—during our final exam period, which is Thu., 5/6/10, from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm. You will present the contents of your written report to your classmates (you will not present your self-evaluation or your evaluation of your collaborators). You may use any materials you choose to make your presentation as good as it can be: videos, pictures from your project, music, etc. Each presentation will be no longer than twenty minutes. Any student whose presentation goes over the twenty-minute limit will earn a lower grade on this assignment.

The Value Of Your Graded Components

Graded Component	minimum value	chosen value
PARTICIPATION	20%	_____
THREE PAPERS	10%	_____
TWO EXAMS	10%	_____
ARCHIVAL RESEARCH PROJECT	10%	_____
FINAL PROJECT	20%	_____
TOTAL of "chosen value" column	_____	

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Please note: (page number) indicates the first page of the reading

All readings listed in the schedule are required readings and are due on the date on which they are listed.

UNIT 1 Planning

Mon., 1/10 Read course syllabus, bring questions to class

VIDEOS: *One Fine Day*

DISCUSSION: "Lexicon of the Debates"—what topics interest you?

Wed., 1/12 READ: (all in Kolmar and Bartkowski):

Treichler and Kramarae, "Feminism" (7)

Walker, "Womanist" (11)

Bunch, "Not by Degrees" (12)

"Lexicon of the Debates" in Kolmar and Bartkowski, 42-60

"Feminisms in the U.S." WebCT

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED: take reading notes and bring them to class with you

Mon., 1/17 NO CLASSES—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., BIRTHDAY

Wed., 1/19 DUE: Pre-"Feminist" Readings (all on WebCT)

Hildegard of Bingen, "The Light Speaks" (ea. 12th century)

Christine de Pizan, "To Ennoble the Mind of Woman" (1405)

Laura Cereta, "Wearied by your Carping" (1488)

Artemisia Gentileschi, "The Spirit of Caesar in the Soul of a Woman" (1649)

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "How Great Is the Strength of My Inclination" (1691)

Tarabai Shinde, "Why Blame Women?" (1882)

Qiu Jin, "Promoting Women's Rights" (ea. 20th century)

Taj Al-Saltana, "'Liberating Women': An Iranian Feminist Perspective on National Identity" (1914)

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, "The Purdah Bus" (late 1920s)